

Representative Adam Fetterman
121 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard
Bldg. B
Port St. Lucie, FL 34984

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*Don't hesitate to contact my office
with any problem — large or small.
We're here to serve you!*
— Adam

District Office

121 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard
Bldg B
Port St. Lucie, FL 34984
772-873-6500
772-873-6502 (Fax)

Tallahassee Office

1401 The Capitol
402 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
850-488-8749

Staff

Legislative Assistant
Gaby Suarez
Gaby.Suarez@myfloridahouse.gov

District Assistant
Thomas Rehyansky
Thomas.Rehyansky@myfloridahouse.gov

Representative Fetterman Serves on the Following Councils and Committees:

- Full Appropriations Council on General Government & Health Care
- Rules & Calendar Council
- Natural Resources Appropriations Committee
- Civil Justice & Courts Policy Committee
- Governmental Affairs Policy Committee

The Fetterman Flyer

2009 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE *from* Representative Adam Fetterman



DETAILS INSIDE ▶

Learn What Adam and the Legislature Are Doing To:

- Solve the Budget Problem
- Improve Education
- Cut Insurance Costs
- Stop Criminals

Representative Fetterman:

Working for Martin and St. Lucie Counties

▶ Standing Against a Budget That Doesn't Meet Our Needs

With unemployment at high levels, housing prices depressed and tourism and other key Florida industries suffering, a historic opportunity to reshape our state's economic policies and tax structure was missed.

Simply put, I believe the budget could have been better. It doesn't adequately meet Florida's responsibilities toward its residents in education, health care, public safety and other areas.



The budget that passed the Legislature will raise taxes, fees and university tuition, drain trust funds and cut programs crucial to meeting the needs of our people, especially seniors and those who rely on our state's health care services.

I had hoped for a much better outcome for Florida, and that's why I voted "no" to this budget's final passage.

A better state budget would have done more for economic development and workforce training to strengthen our economy. It would have done more to preserve and enhance services for our most vulnerable – our children, the elderly and people with disabilities. A better state budget would have helped Floridians obtain affordable housing and rebuild their confidence in our state.

▶ Working to Reduce the Cost of Insurance



The Legislature took modest steps this session to stabilize the property insurance market, ease rate hikes for many Floridians and give all consumers new options for choosing a property insurance company of their choice.

Dramatic rate hikes for customers of state-run Citizens Insurance were set to go into effect January 2010. But under legislation passed during the session, those increases will be capped at 10 percent instead of 40 percent and higher. This step should provide some comfort to home and business owners and bolster the actuarial soundness of Citizens' rates.

Still, major insurance reform remains undone and our state faces too many financial risks should a major storm come our way.

▶ Investing in Education for Our Children's Future

I am pleased that the Legislature has put to use nearly \$2 billion in federal economic recovery funds approved by President Barack Obama's administration. These dollars will help give schools and teachers the resources they need in hopes that we will one day have a world-class education system.

The proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 state budget increases per-student spending only modestly, reaching a statewide average of \$6,873. We can do better, especially considering Florida school funding has fallen since the Fiscal Year 2007-08 level of \$7,128 per student.

Overall, I'm disappointed that the state is not meeting my expectations for adequately funding our schools. For instance, by delaying by another year the implementation of the voter-approved Class Size Amendment at the classroom level, the Legislature is making it more difficult to reach class-size goals in the years to come.

The total budget for colleges and universities will increase slightly, from nearly \$3.2 billion to a proposed \$3.4 billion in the year ahead. But the additional funding comes at a cost: higher tuition paid by our students and their families.



▶ Fighting for Safer Streets, Victim Assistance and Law Enforcement



Thanks to our efforts, Florida has joined a majority of other states that give police the power to ticket drivers and front seat passengers solely for failing to buckle up. Seat belts save lives. The measure has the added benefit of putting the state in line for a federal grant that could reach \$35 million.

To help combat the drug trade and the abuse of addictive medications, a measure passed would require Florida pharmacists and others to report drug sales to a statewide database. The step aims to crack down on abuse and help doctors and pharmacists curb narcotics abusers who attempt to get excessive prescriptions from multiple sources.

We also championed legislation to help victims of sexual assault. Florida law will now require officers who investigate complaints of sexual battery to provide victims with information about access to medical treatments, forensic examinations and crisis intervention services. Victims are not always aware of free services available through their local rape crisis center, and it's imperative that law enforcement officials do everything in their power to assist these individuals.

Keeping Florida secure is a top priority and a responsibility I take seriously. My colleagues and I worked hard this session to keep our communities safe.